



FISHING VESSEL SAFETY **FACT SHEET**

406 MHZ EPIRB SIGNAL REGISTRATION

SUBJECT: Carriage and Registration of 406 MHz
Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRB).

REGULATIONS: 46 CFR 25.26, 47 CFR 80.1061(f)

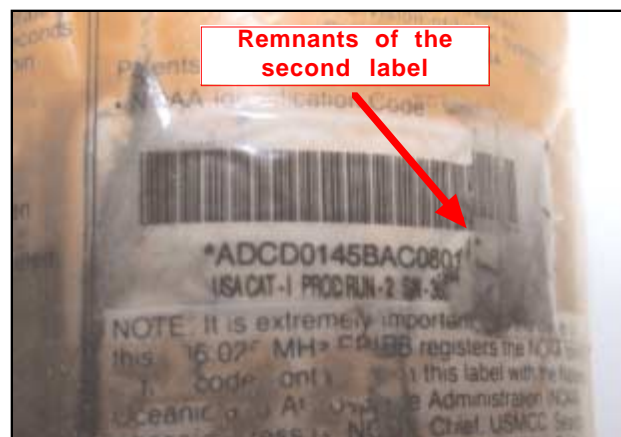
APPLICABILITY: All commercial fishing vessels and
small passenger vessels operating beyond the 3
NAUTICAL MILE line, as found on National Ocean
Service Charts.

PROBLEM: Some commercial fishing vessels fitted
with 406 MHz EPIRB's have improperly or failed to
register the 406 MHz EPIRB beacon signal, which will
prevent timely, accurate identification of the vessel in
distress in the event of an EPIRB transmission.

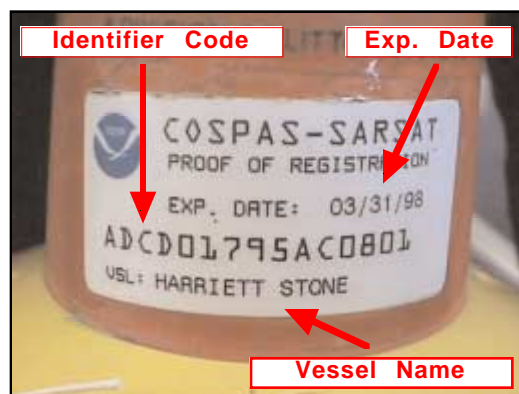
Each 406 MHz EPIRB is designed to transmit a unique
identifier code. One of the largest advantages of the
406 MHz EPIRB system is that each EPIRB signal can
be registered in a data base to the vessel on which it is
located. In the event of a transmission from that
EPIRB, the signal registration feature allows the Coast
Guard to immediately identify the vessel involved.

Quick and accurate identification of a vessel
transmitting an EPIRB signal is critically important.
It allows the Coast Guard to issue an urgent VHF
marine information broadcast alerting other vessels
that may be in the immediate area of the stricken
vessel, to make emergency telephone notification to
persons designated by the vessel owner, and to provide
search and rescue units with an accurate description
of the vessel in distress. EPIRB registration is also
crucial in the prompt resolution of accidental
transmissions of EPIRB's, which continue to the
largest source of EPIRB transmissions.

The EPIRB unique identifier code, also referred to as
a hexadecimal code, can be found on a white label
positioned on the side of the EPIRB. This code will be
a 15 digit combination letter and number code. When
registering the signal of this EPIRB, it is critically
important that exact code be printed legibly on the
registration form. Errors in the recording of this
code number will prevent accurate identification of
the EPIRB in the event of transmission.



*U.S. Coast Guard personnel recently found this EPIRB
on a fishing vessel. A service facility had replaced
the internal microprocessor of the EPIRB, and had
affixed a second code identification label over the
original label. The second label failed (see remnants
on the right). This exposed the original label, which
bears a now incorrect identifier code.*



Commercial fishermen should ensure that their EPIRB
beacon ID codes are properly registered with NOAA.
Every registered beacon will be supplied a
registration verification label, which should be
affixed to the EPIRB. The identifier code listed on
the label should be carefully cross checked with the
manufacturer's identifier code label to ensure that it
is correct.

Fishermen with questions on EPIRB registration can
contact this office or NOAA at 1-888-212-SAVE.